



February 12, 2020

The Honorable Josh Hawley
Senator of Missouri
212 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hawley:

On behalf of Collective Liberty, I am writing to express strong support for Senator Hawley's bill reauthorizing a comprehensive study on trafficking in persons.

Human trafficking exists in virtually every country in the world today, including the United States. An estimated [25 million people](#) are trafficked and enslaved globally, with some estimates reaching [40 million people](#). Between [18,000 and 20,000 people](#) are trafficked into the United States alone. Trafficking victims have been identified in all 50 states and Washington, DC, and have been exploited in the commercial sex trade or forced labor. Anyone can fall victim to human trafficking, especially vulnerable populations like children, migrant laborers, the homeless, runaway youth, foreign nationals, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ individuals. These estimates are broad and often inconsistent - and the push for strong data collection and more representative statistics is a huge contribution to the efficacy of our anti-trafficking efforts as both a nation and a global anti-trafficking community.

The last comprehensive federal study on human trafficking was in 2009. The landscape of human trafficking and the illicit network of systems has evolved and adapted significantly in the decade since that study, especially to technology. Currently, we do not have any comprehensive portal for data collection, sharing, and dissemination of human trafficking information. We support Senator Hawley's bill for an in-depth examination of the most severe forms of trafficking in persons in the United States, especially sex trafficking and illicit commercial sex acts. It is crucial we update our knowledge of the extent of human trafficking in the United States - our own backyard - to better comprehend the dynamics, who the victims are, how to protect people, and most importantly, how to effectively combat this crime and human rights abuse so that it one day ceases to exist.



Collective Liberty makes data and analysis a key theme of its work. Data and analysis allow us to consistently update our understanding of how trafficking regularly evolves and ensure that those working with survivors have the most up to date information to guide their programs and practices. For example, using best practices from data-driven research and connecting this to on-the-ground work, has enabled us to train over 2,500 law enforcement officers and 4,000 financial crimes investigators in the United States. This has resulted in case-building support and intelligence analysis for over 1,000 illicit massage business trafficking cases. These have included majorly publicized cases like the one in Florida that resulted in the arrest of Robert Kraft, to cases involving domestic pimps in Texas, sex buyers targeting minors in Louisiana, and labor trafficking cases in restaurants and agriculture businesses in California and Texas. Reauthorization of the TVPRA for an updated comprehensive federal study on trafficking in persons would, without a doubt, advance our knowledge of human trafficking in the United States, and most importantly, safeguard human security.

As we continue to build out a collaborative field of anti-trafficking law enforcement officers, the federal effort to increase the collective knowledge and data available to the community will increase our ability to effectively identify and stop traffickers.

Thank you for your continued work, support, and efforts in advancing the fight against trafficking in persons.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Keyhan
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